

*Mission Permanente
de la République du Bénin
auprès des Nations Unies*



*Permanent Mission of
the Republic of Benin
to the United Nations*

SIXTY EIGHT SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**ELEVENTH MEETING OF THE OWG ON SDGs
(Health and population dynamics
Education and life-long learning)**

**STATEMENT
BY**

**H.E.MR. JEAN -FRANCIS R. ZINSOU
AMBASSADOR PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF BENIN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS,
CHAIR OF THE GLOBAL COORDINATION BUREAU OF LDCs**

NEW YORK, 5 MAY 2014

**Distinguished Co-Chairs
Excellencies
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of LDCs. This statement supplements the statement made by Bolivia on behalf of the G77 and China.

On health and population dynamics, the Group of LDCs broadly supports the issues captured in the working document. However, the Group would like to make the following comments:

The Group has noted that some targets are time bound, while others are open-ended. For the sake of consistency, the Group would like to see all the goals and targets are time-bound.

The Group is of the view that health and related issues such as mental health and wellbeing, have interlinkages with many other targets.

As indicated in the IPoA, the Group would insist on having included the following target mentioned under paragraph 89)b of the IPoA: "Take steps to realize the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standards of physical and mental health, including sexual and reproductive health;"

The Group of LDCs would like to address some of the issues related to migration under this focus area and would like see the reflection of the following two targets:

- (a) Reduce the cost of migration and the transfer fee of remittance flows and foster the development impact of remittances; and
- (b) Resist the imposition of unreasonable restrictions on labor migration in order to maximize the benefits of international migration and develop a system of short-term migration, including workers from least developed countries.

Similar provisions have already been agreed in the IPoA.

LDCs have huge deficit in trained medical personnel, technology, services and infrastructure. Health expenditure per capita in LDCs is around \$40 per year against a global average of more than \$1000. The group therefore wants to see the following targets under the means of implementation related to this focus area:

- (a) Provide support for strengthening the LDC efforts to increase the ratio of health professionals to the population,

- (b) Support LDCs to develop their capacity to systematically collect and analyse demographic data to be used, inter alia, for designing appropriate national policies,
- (c) Promote youth exchange programmes, including through virtual campuses and other networking mechanisms, which is already agreed in the IPoA, and
- (d) Provide enhanced financial, technical and technological support to LDCs to build appropriate health related infrastructure.

Under education and life-long learning, the Group broadly supports the issues covered in the working document. We commend the distinguished Co-Chairs for incorporating our proposal on setting a target to provide scholarships for students from LDCs.

The Group will suggest reformulating target 4g) as follows: all schools to provide a physically and mentally safe and healthy learning environment for all students, and ensure non-discriminatory education.

The Group would reiterate that the means of implementation (MoI) for education is vitally important and would like to make the following two specific proposals:

- (a) Promote students exchange programmes, joint researches and access to digital libraries; and
- (b) Provide enhanced financial and technical support for LDCs to implement their national education plans and programmes with special emphasis on educational infrastructure building, including modern facilities and equipment and qualified teachers.

I thank you all for your kind attention.